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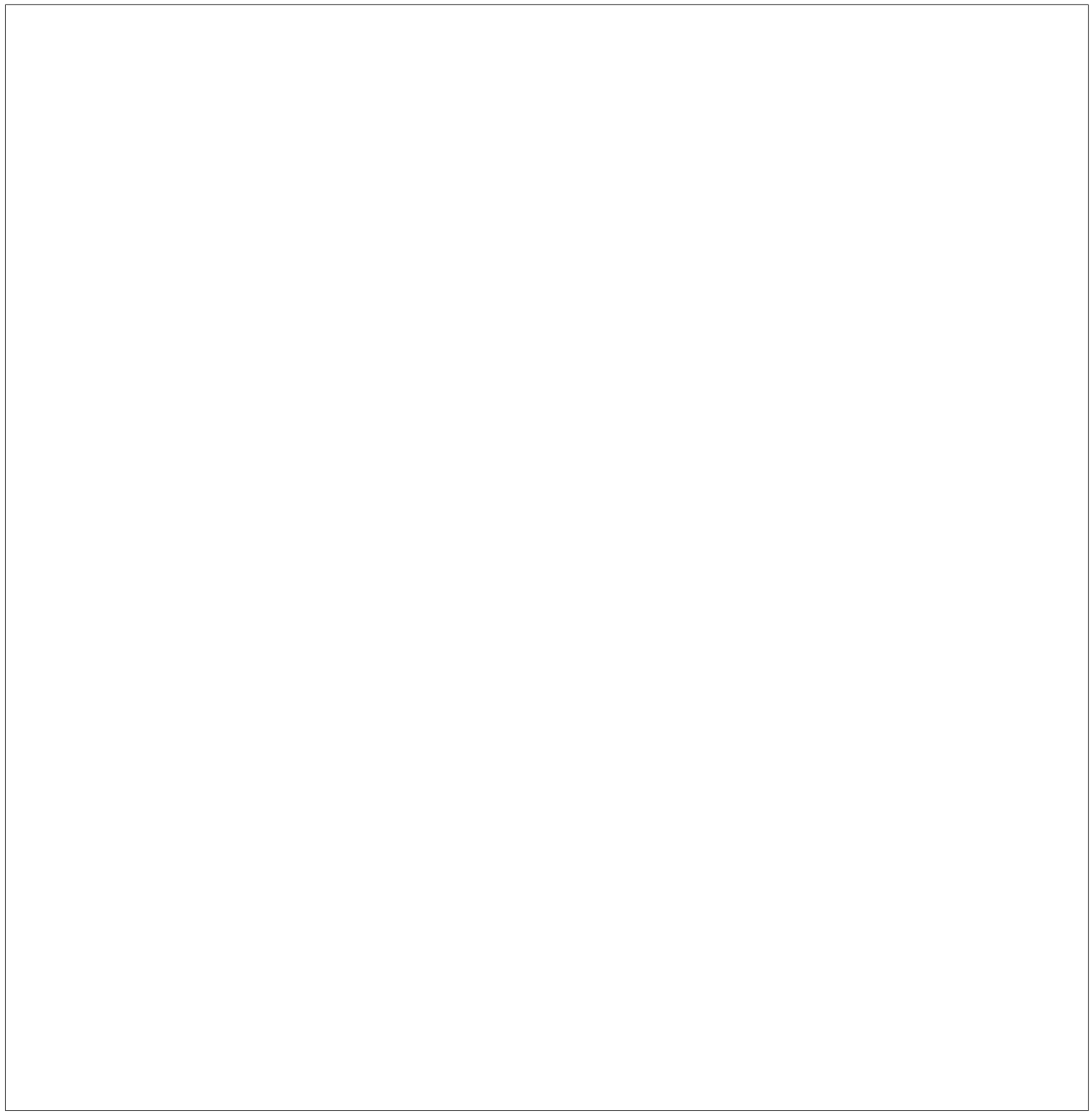

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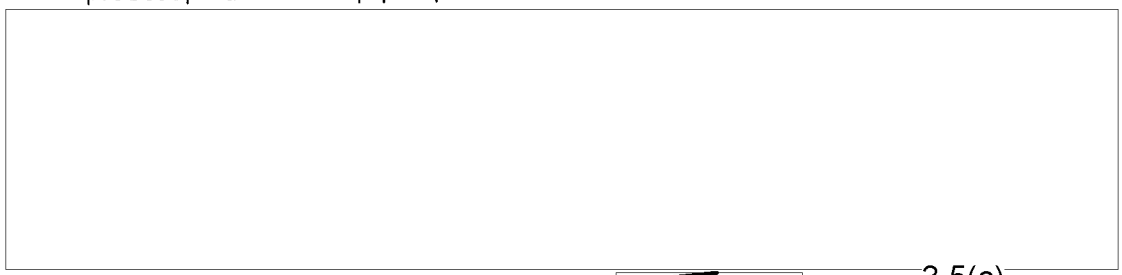

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ARGENTINA

Recent events in Argentina suggest that the military is getting in a position to take over the government, but there is no firm evidence that they have made a decision to move yet. Reported discussions in the high command no longer focus on whether a coup is necessary or feasible, but on how and when it should be undertaken. Two key personnel shifts will facilitate the execution of a coup.

General Suarez Mason, long considered a coup advocate, has been appointed army chief in Buenos Aires. His immediate predecessors were only lukewarm to the idea of a take-over.

Another reputed proponent of a military take-over, General Harguindeguy, has been named head of the Federal Police, which patrols the borders and has important responsibilities in combating terrorists. The police could also be a vital element in countering reaction by militant Peronist civilians after a coup.

3.3(b)(1)

navy commander Admiral Massera has said that the recent positioning of ships far up the Parana River is intended not only to support the counterinsurgency effort, but is also designed to seal off potential escape routes of those who would try to flee after a coup. 3.3(b)(1)

Massera claims it is a foregone conclusion among the armed forces that they will at some point remove the present government.

3.3(b)(1)

Massera and army commander in chief General Videla are giving some thought to specific courses of action to follow in the event of a coup. to prepare lists of prominent persons to be arrested following a take-over. The purpose of the arrests, which would concentrate on prominent citizens suspected of subversion or other illegal activities, would be to build public sympathy for the revolt.

Videla is said to have commented that if there were a coup, the three service chiefs would probably form a governing junta. The junta might designate a fourth officer as virtual prime minister or give primary responsibility to one of its own members. Videla said further that sympathetic civilian advisers have provided the military with a "library" of plans on how to proceed after a coup, although the officers have made no specific decisions.

Officers looking for a pretext to move against Peron may be heartened by growing indications that labor, long one of her mainstays, as well as the business sector, are becoming increasingly restive. Continuation of this trend would in these officers' eyes bring public repudiation of the President to the point they consider necessary before moving. 3.5(c)

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